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Cover

THE MISTAKES

OF

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL,

ON

NATURE AND GOD.

A SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM.

BY

GEORGE W. EDGETT.

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MISTAKES OF INGERSOLL.

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL has said that "felling forests is not the end of agriculture, driving pirates from the sea is not all there is of commerce." That is so, and though he may have done some good work in felling ghosts, clearing up the wilderness of hell, producing skulls in testimony of human progress, and pursuing the formal gods of the past to the end of all their power, yet when he leaves that field of labor, to pursue the Supreme Absolute to the extremity of nothing, unless of organic nature, he is reëntering the wilderness of ancient idolatry for his own system, with this difference; that his gods are a supposed infinity of things, while the ancients only took a few things for convenience' sake.

He is on the wrong trail, and that is what we propose to demonstrate.

He says, "A god must not only be material, but he must be an organism, capable of changing other forms of force into thought-force." He says, "A deity outside of nature exists in nothing, and is nothing." He thus reverses the creative theory, and falls into the opposite absurdity. He asserts material infinitude and infinitude of worlds, probably to give his chief organic god, or union of such gods, a chance of infinity.

But materiality, worlds and their products, so far as we know, are only individual things; and it is evident that individual parts can form no portion of absolute infinity, or that no limitless aggregation of parts can fill that one single mode of infinitude called space.

All organic forms are divisible into parts. Gas, air, rocks, trees, men, everything we know, can be divided into separate parts. Then, if such things could make an infinite, a part of infinity might be measured and divided. If this be true, we come to conceive of infinity as capable of being cut in two. And this gives us two infinites; for if you deny infinity as to one part, you must deny it as to the other, and also as to both parts together, each part being thus declared finite.

This brings us to the absurdity of one infinitude twice as great as either of those which compose it.

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In the same manner, if we consider countless millions of parts as constituting infinity, we must conceive it as millions of times greater than each of those parts; and in order to maintain the idea of an infinitude so made, we are still compelled to assert that each of those parts is also infinite.

So, including all things, whether capable of thought or not, even though imagined as one thinking being, they could not constitute Infinite Intelligence, for infinitude of organic form is impossible. Hence we are forced to conclude, either that there is no infinite, or that Infinite Intelligence, if it does exist, can only be conceived of as indivisible, incapable of increase or diminution, existing by virtue of no organism, absent from no needle point of space.

Where stands the block of granite, God was; and if not still there, each instant the same, then has He changed to granite? But if granite expresses Him by form, you again come to the absurdity of making Him divisible, or finite. And if He is displaced by the granite, then He loses so much of His omnipresence, or is constantly diminished by just so much in the extent of His infinity, which is an absurdity just as great as the other. Therefore, we again see that the Intelligence or Spirit called God, to be in all and through all, forever formulating matter in shapes and ways beyond the wildest human fancy, could neither be caused nor constituted of material form.

When a material god, or none at all, is asserted, the philosopher testifies whereof he knows not; like a witness who swears to the non-existence of something, because he never knew it. The little speck that he does know, superficially by cause and effect, is made a sample of the boundless all that he does not know. He makes nature the asylum of his ignorance, in reasoning of God, the same as others make the will of God their refuge, in reasoning of nature.

Like the boy who imagined the end of the world and set out to find it, one learns a multitude of things as he travels on in thought, and all egotism is sure to diminish as the universe seems to increase. But when coming forever to the same point in the circle, whereof we try to find the end, why not learn like the boy, by experience, or by the efforts of humanity for thousands of years, that the object aimed at does not exist as we by inheritance supposed; that God has not a formal nature, and that organism, with all its products and refinements, cannot involve, nor pertain to, Absolute Being?

Let us see if this will not relieve us of the absurdities we come

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to in other ways. Admit the eternality of matter, force, and motion, and so escape the absurd conclusions of the creative theory on the one hand, and meet the logic of the atheist on the other.

One absurdity thus avoidable is this: since it is self-evident that no part of creation could have been something and nothing at the same instant, all things must have been made of something called matter; and if there was nothing in existence before creation except God, then it follows that Himself was the matter whereof the universe was created.

And we also avoid another error of belief that men fell into from the old theory, that an act of human will and faith, by the power of God, might create or change things, the same as He was supposed to have done from the beginning; or, for example, that any other mountain besides a mountain of thought might be removed by perfect faith.

Now let us admit that throughout nature, between all forms, as between the rolling stars, there is an actual material power that belts them all together and apart in equilibrium, by an eternal force that forever eludes the analysis and pursuit of thought. And suppose just here that we are met by the consequent fact, demonstrated by science, that matter is impenetrable and not divisible, or only divisible by particles and not in its infinity. Then, in the same manner that we proved the Infinite God to be indivisible, or not composed of parts, so may we prove by a like division of parts, that no limitless number of parts can constitute the infinite essence of matter.

Then it is inquired, How does infinite matter in essence differ from Infinite God in essence, or can there be more than one infinite? We answer, Yes; not only more than one, but, to make an absolute and free infinity, there must be an infinity of infinites.

Imagine a line running through infinite space. Its extension *ad infinitum* goes on forever beyond our comprehension, and we call that line infinite. And you may conceive of parallel lines *ad infinitum*, each one also infinite, or an endless number of infinite lines not parallel, that are also possible. And so of planes in infinite extension, and so of circles. Commence with the circle of a silver dollar, and go on increasing the size of your ideal circles for a life-time, or till you come to the conception of one inclosing all visible stars, and you will never come to conceive the end of all possible circles, and so we call that idea of circles infinite; and

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this not only with reference to size, but with reference to the limitless number possible, of the same size as each of the others. Or, to illustrate by another example, consider the infinite relations of effect, from every atom of all material forms; and then follow on from small to great, from Earth to stars, and know, of Mind, all things are infinite, in solar systems infinite.

This theory of the infinity of infinite ideas is the only one possible that does not conflict with the fact that no infinite can be made up of those parts by which we form our conceptions, as we have already seen of that called the infinite extension of matter. And as nothing can be a part of infinity, so nothing known can be infinite in itself, but only as it is an idea of infinite mind in the mode of space. To deny infinity in this manner were to deny the infinite altogether; for if no part can complete an infinite, nor by any means be itself infinite, then there is no infinite.

Now as to matter in essence, Mr. Ingersoll admits that it is just as much unknown, by evidence in the forms of nature, as the God that he denies; but yet he declares that matter, in organic form capable of thought, is the only God possible!

With more cautious wisdom, the agnostic says of the two unknown, I am unable to deny or assert God of matter that I do not know, nor can I deny His existence otherwise because I do not know this. It may be said that names signify nothing as to the unknown, since differences must also be unknown. But by comparison of such conceptions as Supreme Intelligence and matter, we only follow the differences found in ourselves. Knowing nothing of two origins, manifest in different productions or in one, justifies no sound reason in supposing them to be the same when followed into the unknown.

But let us resume our hypothesis. By every form of nature, even unto worlds, we are made primarily conscious that formal matter is not an infinity of things, each one or all together, co-extensive with space; and reason tells us it can only be so by existence in the all-pervading ideas of Infinite Mind, just as lines, planes, and circles exist, in their infinite ideas. But then it is alleged that ideas of infinite circles, as well as all ideas of the numberless variety of other things, are only forms of the attribute of thought; and thought itself is an attribute of matter, existing, so far as we know, only in connection with organized forms of matter as a cause.

Now, sweep humanity and all its knowledge from Earth, or blot

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this world of forms from existence, and would it destroy the true ideas of it? No, such a result can no more be conceived of than a first creation from nothing; because the indestructible matter which assumed the nature of this world had to contain the ideas of it; or, in other words, it had to be actuated by the undeniable power to produce just exactly what it has produced. But perhaps Mr. Ingersoll will deny that things become what they do become? Possibly this modern god-killer may only say that things do not become what they do become, according to any certain ideas. But, to be consistent, he must at least say that all things become what they do become, not because of any previous ideas before they began material form — not because of any ideas without which things could not be — oh no, but because nothing prevented them (prevented what?) from becoming what they did become.

Most magnificent reason! But what prevented or prevents all material from remaining as it was or as it is? Without a spirit-power, were life possible, or the struggle for any untried form of life, and the struggle to retain it against all resistance, easier than its non-existence? Then what, pray, made eternal matter set out to appear in different form from what it was, or to seek new relations in form of life? Follow the inquiry, and what makes an animalcule, a fish, a monkey, or a man, work about in different directions? Common sense tells us, it is all because everything exists in other attributes of Thinking Being, as well as the material, and because those attributes are in very self the ideas expressed in the material, according to conditions affecting their union.

It would appear indeed even more reasonable to assert that organized matter exists, so far as we know, only in connection with ideas as a cause, than to say that ideas exist only with organism as a cause. If either infinite attribute, mind or matter, could be conceived as being prior to the other, ideas would seem to have priority of power in the lines of creation, as far superior to the materials used as the mind of the artist is superior to the paints with which he gives us the blooming landscape.

Section II.

As to most things in nature, their very being, their embodiment of ideas and causes, are forever hid from them, for want of intelligent consciousness. And his immediate causes are hidden from man until long after he is born, when he learns, by hearsay, to whom his formation is due.

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But the ultimate appearance of man's personal perception and thought, after the idea of his formation is expressed in his growth, is evidence of the fact that all the ideas involved in his being had existed forever, in relative lines of infinite sequences, just as conclusive as any evidence that the material had eternally existed by which his physical body came into personality. This will be apparent if we consider the nature of infinity — that nothing can be taken from it nor anything added to it — that nothing can be taken from, nor added to, either infinite Thinking Being or infinite matter, whether said to be one and the same or not. And because we know nothing except by material organism, as to object or subject, is no proof that what knows had no existence before it knew.

There are no possibles that do not exist previous to their demonstration. If there were, the nature of possibilities would depend upon demonstration, whereas the dependence is exactly the reverse. So, to be demonstrated, or to demonstrate itself, a possible thing must in some form previously exist; and all the ideas demonstrated in process of nature must have had a previous existence, *ad infinitum*, by the infinity of relations, in the infinite of Thinking Being.

And hence, we know that organism is not the source of thought, Thinking Being, or God made manifest, nor even the cause of that absurd god of whom Mr. Ingersoll claims to be a part, and of whose great magnitude we might learn more, if we only knew what consequent portion the Ingersoll part is of the whole god.

Honor bright, now, let us follow atheism beyond its own resources, by use of its own logic. No form of thought can exist without the same form of matter, and no form of matter without the same form of thought; that is, one cannot exist without the other, whether embodied in a stone, a vegetable, or animal life; and therefore, neither one can be the cause or effect of the other, in the thing itself. Hence it is concluded that mind and matter are one. But do not stop here. Both forms are the effect of their union, each one of which, followed through disappearing causes, like parallel lines, will never meet as one and the same, though both are mutually dependent for parallel existence.

For comparison, we might liken the union of thought and organism to the union of different chemicals. The product appears to be a new thing, of different power, one and the same throughout, till its identity is lost to view by a disunion into the two compound

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elements of it. And by the same process of analysis and separation, the individual identity of each compound element is also apparently destroyed.

But the effect of their union is not in the individual factors of it as actual causes,— although they so exist, in unity, by means of some previous union, enabled in the same manner, by another idea in matter.

This will be made perfectly plain further on, in testing the material elements and theory of Lord Bacon.

And thus we know that things, of themselves together, with no other involving nor enabling power, can neither make nor constitute the effect of unified sameness. Then this must be the result of an unknown means in which they exist, and without which nothing in the universe could be as it is. And since nothing in the universe is known to us except such effects and results, we are driven to the conclusion that nature exists by virtue of this unknown means. These things illustrate that all we can know is the product of relations, not the absolute Substance; that no two, nor forty, nor countless things, as individuals, can compose or involve the actual Substance, which enables all relations, all unions, and all forces to produce what they do produce in Thinking Being. Hence, we declare that nature is in God, not God in nature.

Matter, force, and motion, or cause and effect, being admitted, Mr. Ingersoll claims that the universe needs no God to account for its phenomena. Can he explain or touch with the utmost reach of reason, by all that is known of organism, force, motion, and natural selection, the anterior and intervening agency whereby a so-called cause is made the same as its effect in different things? Can he explain one single little phenomenon of nature without the presence of that Intelligence called God? We defy him or any other man to do it. Tell us how matter could produce two different animals from life-cells of the same material, without the presence of their perpetual idea,— without the presence of Thinking Being,— and then you have explained all the phenomena of the universe without a God. Till then it well befits an honest man to do obedient homage to the Supreme Power in which he is, be he Ingersoll or Christian.

Original sameness or nothingness of different things is denied or admitted with equal assurance, on account of confused ideas arising from consciousness of relative existence, and an utter misconception of those phenomena that demonstrate the necessity of absolute self-existence. Because no thought nor particle, in mind

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or matter, can appear by our senses without relation in sameness and fitness to our capacity, ignorance supposes that the destruction of known forms or the end of known relations is an end of the same differences.

As to known quantities, we say of things, each being equal to another thing, they are equal to each other. This axiom, applied to the unknown essence of various life and products, has been the basis of much sophistry in metaphysics. Failing to find anything but material as cause of itself, the atheist assumes that things and combinations which are in every respect of atoms the same must be known as exactly alike. For example, it is supposed that two things composed of the same proportion of the same constituent elements must be alike. What do we find by analysis? We find two different spices constituted of the same things in the same proportion. We find the oils of citron, lemon, orange, black pepper, juniper, and other things, are each 100 parts, exactly 88.24 carbon and 11.76 hydrogen. We find the constituents of common street gas and the oil of roses are the same, each compound atom of both being four atoms of hydrogen and four atoms of carbon. Chemistry undertakes to explain these phenomena by assuming a different arrangement of the unknown atoms. But what we assert is — the eternal difference of the essential ideas which those compound atoms express, in different things. Diversity of flowers nourished by the same elements; variety of men, — black, white, and otherwise different; graphite, black charcoal, and the brilliant diamond, each one pure carbon; none of these, nor any of the multiform differences in the world, are to be explained by simple elements in the alphabet of nature as known to science.

And just here we see the fallacy of Lord Bacon's philosophy, which was one of the primary lessons in evolution, of scientists like Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel. As a vast number of words are formed by combinations of the simple alphabet, so he sought the antecedent cause of all natural phenomena in an alphabet of nature, as it were, or in a limited number of simple elemental natures, from which all varieties were deemed derivable, and to be accounted for as secondary effects. This theory was the grand center of his system; so he gave us a list of simple natures as the grand axis of all research, asserting that the end of all human knowledge in natural science might soon be arrived at by a few known causes, or by his elementary alphabet and order of induction.

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But the fact of different ideas or things expressed or produced in one simple element, or in the same amounts of two elements, proves a reverse order of creative causation. It proves that the works of nature, its laws, and simple elements are to be studied and known, not by these elements themselves, but by the properties, forms, and forces in which they are. For example: the character of carbon, as being charcoal, graphite, and diamond, could not be known without first having these things, whether we knew of it in many other forms and uses or not. And so of the other simple elements, sixty-four or more in number, as to any form of each; for it is already found of nearly all, that each one is allotropic, or in different forms, qualities, and conditions, like carbon.

And if this order of discovery by diverse things as to their sole constituent or as to the nature of any one element is necessary, it must follow with still greater force that it is likewise necessary as to the like and unlike combinations of different elements in all the more complex varieties of nature. And so we come to the fact that universal phenomena or the ideas in Substance, whereof we can never find beginning nor end, are themselves the alphabet of our knowledge, instead of their simple elements, as taught by Bacon. It thus appears that the antecedent cause of distinctive properties and forms in nature is not in their simple elements, or combinations of them, but in the distinct ideas that involve those elements.

Hence we know that different things are not made so by the elements; that equalities of like elements, singly or in chemical unities, are not necessarily equal things or the same things; that different creations may be the same material compound.

And so, to whatever extent things may be traced in materiality for causes, whether by natural selection (which proves a selecting intelligence), by chemical action, force, heat, motion, or otherwise, the same necessity will forever appear, as to each and all, for the absolute existence of Thinking Being.

For example: aside from generic diversity or variety in the same elements, — which no science, no chemistry can explain, — what makes the science of chemistry in any way possible, by fixing the exact proportion of combining constituents in any certain chemical compound? Or, to amplify our inquiry, while different things may exist in the same proportion of the same elements, what makes the law that each of those things, as a chemical compound, is always so composed? Plainly, the elements involved in the law are not

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makers of the law of composition, by which they are also used in the same proportion for different creations. The question is, then, as to the action of chemical atoms; for instance, not what makes the compound of four atoms carbon and four atoms hydrogen always the fragrant oil of roses, (for the same compound is also the illuminating property of coal gas); but what makes the oil of roses always to be so composed? Or what makes the nature of pure water always to consist, in weight, of eight parts oxygen and one part hydrogen? Dr. Dalton's theory of different, indivisible, unchangeable atoms of matter will not answer these inquiries, for it does not agree with all the facts of differential chemistry, nor allow that power of change necessary for diversities of phenomena.

And thus we are driven again to the necessity of assuming the mastery of ideas, in a self-existent Intelligence that involves all laws, all causes, all materials. Man himself is one of those ideas, and science can neither make nor imitate an effect in nature, unless by means of ideas that already exist in matter.

Chemical force, colors, light, and heat, in the unity of a sunbeam, are not made different powers by the material media whereby we know them, either here or in the sun. To assume the contrary were no less absurd than to say that colors have only a prismatic existence, because we knew nothing of them in pure light, till seen by means of a prism; and the very convertibility of forces into one another — as of magnetism, electricity, light, heat, and chemical action — indicates their elemental sameness, differentiated by the *vis viva* of infinite ideas.

So by every demonstration we come to this conclusion: All things we know of things — their properties, forms, relations, and differences — depend objectively, as to being known, upon the elements, upon which they do not depend for origin or actual existence, as already shown. Therefore, the destruction of known forms, properties, relations, and differences is not to be known or supposed as an end of the same differences in essence unknown, of which they are.

Thus, in every direction, far and near, beyond the known and the unknown of nature, we come to that Unknown called God, which Mr. Ingersoll asserts is growing less and less by the more we know. If he would take the trouble to look beyond the limit of his own conceit, he would feel that Unknown growing greater and greater, just in proportion as nature seems to, by the more he knows.

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Section III.

As constituting the whole of anything, from an atom onward, men name its elements, so far as they know, and call the total of them one thing, like water, clay, air, or man. And they say the oxygen in air and the oxygen in a drop of man-blood are the same; and so they go on, till the same things are supposed to be found in earth, air, and water that make the body of a man. Then, lo! at last some great evolutionist has discovered that a heap of dirt, vegetables, and insects are the same as man, except in form and distribution of parts!

Thus it is, from the elements as cause, men come to reason of the absolute God by one infinite attribute; and after they have made Him up by means of the universe, they can again resolve all things into the same attribute or force, as the cause of its own forms.

But by far the greater class in sophistry fancy that all things were created from nothing, by a Supreme Power of infinite fullness that never had a beginning. Such a perfect self-contradiction calls for no argument. An ignoramus, filled with wonder as to the origin of rain-drops, makes discovery of the ocean, evaporation, and the courses of the wind. Able to go no further for sources, he declares, no less wisely than the more learned, who also fix the limit of nature by what they know, that water was made from nothing.

Thus it is that God comes to be conceived of as responsibly connected with everything in the universe as a first cause, instead of absolute and free existence involving infinite attributes; and then comes the presumptuous, crazy work of trying to harmonize and justify the ways of God.

When we said, therefore, that organism is not the cause of thought, but that neither one could exist without the other, we said no more than that forms of thought and forms of matter do not involve absolute being, of which there can be no parts in any attribute. Therefore we do not refer them to any beginning, from one infinite source; but only say that they exist in infinite continuations, multiplications, and changes, expressed by different attributes in the same individual organism, and that, as an individual expression, the individuality of the one could not exist, as known, without the individuality of the other.

This must be apparent, as well as the fact that actual Substance is not involved in individual personality, inasmuch as it is just as

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possible that a thing should not be as that it should be. Take, for example, any formation like man, such as we may conceive might have been destroyed in its germ. It could not be known to itself nor any other individual like it by the development so prevented. So far as being known to man, then, by individual relations that never existed, that is impossible. But, at the same time, in the infinite relations of absolute Substance and Thinking Being it does exist, otherwise it could not possibly be among an infinity of possibilities. What is the nature of those possibilities?

To us, who know nothing except by limited relations, things are possible or impossible by degrees according to numbers involved in production; as in a lottery of chance, wherein the result becomes one certainty. But make every possible thing infinite or give it an infinity of chances, and then we must conceive all possible things as already existing of Substance in form of ideas.

Then give an idea of man, or any part of man, an endless number of chances to find visible expression, and that idea, or that idea of any part with every other part in the same manner, are sure to find expression. And so all things possible are certain in the ideas of Infinite Being, and appear to us according to the law of possibilities in nature. By this law, the production of one in any material species is evidence just as strong as many — one man, as the whole human race is — proof that the infinite idea exists.

Do you ask for one of the infinity of chances wherein men may be without knowing it themselves and without being known to exist by others? Without assuming, for the present, a case before the demonstrated fact,' it occurs even in physical form, when all are sound asleep, forgotten and forgetful of themselves and their fellows. There lies one certain man asleep, as much unknown to himself as though he had never been born. The idea of that man is surely there in one place, no less than when he was awake. You see him, and the idea of that man is in every one of you that know him as a man, when you sleep. And so, as an individual idea of that man, it must be in all those who have the idea of you, because you possess the idea of that first man. And so we know that the idea of all men is in every man, and the idea of every man that ever lived is in all men; and hence it must be in Thinking Being or in God, in whom all men are everywhere present, as an infinite idea, ever ready, in germ or impress of rightly conditioned matter, for the inception of its visible form.

And now to return to that first man, either asleep or dead. We

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know that the idea of him is just as perpetual as the human race is, at least; only not knowing that the man is in us of idea, of Substance the same, we say he is dead. But as he is multiplied in our ideas, the same as bodies multiply in their effects, we say he yet lives of the ideas of Substance, and of the ideas of those ideas, infinitely extended, diversified, and multiplied, as one of the infinite ideas of God, because there can be no such thing as a last effect of anything.

But how before man was? No man ever saw the first of his own or any genus made, and no proof was ever found, either among living species or in thirty thousand fossiliferous varieties of the past, that one genus becomes another by evolution. All formed of the same elements, to live by similar means, elementary likeness is inevitable. And as to rudimental forms in one genus, of parts that belong to the uses of another, they afford no more evidence of any genus growing from another than they do of its own departure from a more perfectly distinct type. But by every hypothesis, the aggressive and assimilating encroachment of concurrent forms, everywhere manifest in a tendency toward likeness, indicates the necessary existence of cotemporary or co-eternal diversity of generic ideas, by whatever means or in whatever order they may have come into material expression. Then, suppose it may have taken a million years of changing form in the infinite lottery of material life, by outgrowing some parts and developing others, before the idea of any man or any part of man came to be expressed in anything that called itself a man on Earth; would that change the eternal verity of the infinite idea, thus gradually assuming the form of flesh and personal consciousness? What difference does it make how many animal, mineral, and vegetable unions it may have taken to produce that form, involved in universal nature? We know it was once without visible inception, like a thought that finds expression in the chiseled marble, and we know that, by use of the consummate energies in nature, its idea was produced in what we call man, — in a revelation to our senses of what must have been in absolute existence in order to be so revealed.

By every theory, is not each instant of the ages complete in itself, and everything fitted for what follows? Is there any gap in the infinite, any point where nothing begins to be something, where a non-existent form begins to be an existent form? It only appears so at the points of passage from one attribute into another,—from the unknown into the known. Trace man back by fancy, if you

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please, through the union of monkeys or any of the myriad forms of nature, and say that they were all converging to make a man for many thousand years perhaps. If true, it signifies nothing as evidence of no God, for every step concedes the very Intelligence denied. It matters not how, or by what especial material link, or progenitor in creation, man might have been at last produced, — here he is, of existing intelligence undeniable, and not enabled by self-creation.

To combine by natural descent the perfection of visible form, and the consequent mental power, possessing in the form of ideas all things in nature that we know by such connection in ourselves, — for the descent, we say, of such personified intelligence, — it might have been necessary thus to include in man all those things of nature. But, nevertheless, his existence proves that he always did exist among the forms of infinite attributes, otherwise we have at some point the absurdity of an effect without a cause ; a man made by nothing, just as some people think the world was made, by the union of relative nothings. And even in man's feeble conception, it would seem quite as creditable to Thinking Being, and no less wonderful, if such an epitome of all there is on Earth was produced in a natural way, whether in the line of one genus or not, rather than all at once out of clay into which God breathed the breath of life.

But, in spite of this fact, Mr. Ingersoll asserts that God does not appear until, for one single instant at least, the process of an infinite idea has been stopped ! To my mind, this would prove the absence of God instead of His existence. And indeed, if it be asserted that the material process of certain ideas in Thinking Being has stopped with the extinction of any genus or species in nature, we do not urge it as evidence of God, but, on the contrary, to maintain our view of Supreme Being, we say the conditions of material expression have passed away, but not the ideas ; and so we assert, what no one will deny, that, in a recurrence of the same conditions, those ideas would again express the same forms of life in materiality. Miracles, for one of which Mr. Ingersoll passes around his hat among enlightened men, are not the test of reason's God immutable, but of heathen gods.

Section IV.

And now, suppose we admit for a moment the ground of atheism, that there is nothing besides materiality, — that all mind is a material

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emanation of organism; then all such organism must be supplied, or continually made of the same emanation, and we have visible form made of invisible form, or material made of thought, both the same thing, thinking Substance. Concede the most absurd claim materialism could make, and say that in the universal interchange of matter, an amount equal to the whole world, or equal to all its material forces, has already been used a thousand times by conversion into thought; then were not the thought of man in every particle of Earth, and every particle of Earth in the thought of man, still enlarging the view of man as an idea even in materialism?

And if mind is such a refinement of matter into force, or bread into the spirit of poetry, as Mr. Ingersoll thinks, then it is an extension or refined duplicate of the same union found in the body. In other words, the body is continually becoming the same as the mind, and the mind is continually becoming the same as its effect, and so on, *ad infinitum;* and this, not only in the circle of organic life, but by effect in extension through all else. If this be not so admitted, then must we come to the absurd conclusion of a last effect in the infinite circle of extension: thus denying altogether the infinite succession of cause and effect of emanations, that must reach throughout the universe of such thinking being, as the effect of a planet or a particle must reach through space.

This brings us back to the fact that everything is infinitely extended by the relations in infinite Substance, and that the mind or soul in man is likewise infinite or immortal in the infinite of Thinking Being. And this must necessarily be equally true whether matter and absolute Thinking Being are inseparably one and the same or not.

How can we illustrate this wonderful conception of God that we thus come to even through materialism? Shut your eyes, take an orange in your hand; and now, in what part of your conscious being is that orange? Is it only in one place against the fingers? Is it not in every particle of nerve and flesh that connects it through you as a thinking form of being? Only think of it, and where is it as an idea? Is it not in itself, in you, and everywhere you will think of its being? Think of oranges and other things together; are not all and each one wherever your mind is, no less than in every atom of your enabling brain, as forms of thought?

And even so, not only must be the forms of ideas, but the Substance of which they are, through all and in all, of the infinite of Thinking Being. Forms of Substance we can know, but not the

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Substance of which forms are. Take away all forms, mental and material, and yet Substance whereof they are remains the same. Pursue this forever as the infinite involving all forms, and you come no nearer to knowing actual Substance *in esse* than you are this instant, because you are of Substance. If Substance were of you or in you by form, as body or thoughts are, you could know it; but nothing, so far as we know, can know itself *per se*, free from relation. A thought cannot know itself except by another thought. A brick embodies thought that can only be known by another thought like the one it expresses; and this thought, like the first, can only be known by another thought like it, and so on without end; and thus we are forced to conclude again that there is no first cause of anything, but that all things are infinite, of the infinite attributes in Thinking Being, or in God.

Do you ask me how Thinking Being, in such infinite sequences of effect, can understand itself, having no possible relations outside of itself by which to know itself? Of self we know that there is knowing where we know. And if you were a million times greater intelligence than now, involving what you now are, you could suppose no place in such intelligence where there were no knowing. Conceived of thus as Intelligence in extension *ad infinitum*, and God can be no further a conception of reason. Then ask you how God can be infinities unified! one understanding absolute! one harmony wherein all seeming discords blend! Ask the parasite in a particle of my flesh how my blood circulates to give it life, or how I am understood by myself! Ask the animalcule in a drop of water tumbling over Niagara how such confusion can be the sublimity of law and order! Ask the monarch of the ocean to explain his universe of water, whereof all things seem subject to his use! Ask the lion in his native jungle, where all other life appeared to be for him until he met his master, how man, his infinite superior, can understand the laws of his own being!

God is not the passing creature of a union such as man — not intelligent as man is — He is Intelligence itself, impossible to know. Not inruling nor overruling like a man, but involving all, He is neither thought nor will, in any human sense, nor changeable by faith, in which all men are different; but He is the living Spirit in which all faith must be reflected of itself, according to the nature of the man.

To say that such Being, of which we are, does not understand itself, because we know nothing but by relation, is to deny our own

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existence. It would be like the intelligent insect in our flesh, who lives by our life in his own universe, denying that we know anything, because there is no especial care over his life. It would be worse than a shadow denying its cause; more foolish than a form claiming to be the origin of itself; more absurd than a sculptured monument asserting self-creation; because we know that we exist, of intelligence in form, and we know that we can trace to no beginning nor ending the order of intelligence in matter from which we came and to which we go.

Section V.

In endless varieties of life, like begets like, of misery as well as joy; and many people are inquiring in the name of suffering innocence, if all is not as the atheist supposes, by chance instead of God. We answer no; not even though God were the blind force of materiality that atheism claims. No matter how or why man makes a certain use of partial freedom; in himself as individual, class, or genus, will he find the execution of the general laws inevitable, for happiness or misery. Compensation for all conditions, though universal instead of individual, is, however, everywhere possible; and one whom we think lowest in material blessedness, may become the happiest of Mind. But any waiver of laws for individual relief, would contradict the law universal, and so destroy all law, all unity of government. In spite of this fact, Mr. Ingersoll says that all is chance, or "might be any other way as well as the way it is." Too much engrossed by details, the universal spirit of the law is lost.

As to the endless diversity of ideas, forms, and lives, forever moving, merging, changing, like begetting like, judge this by introspection. You find in the universe of your own mind, inside your single skull, dead memories, like gold, like rocks, and trees. You find form following form, men, mountains, lakes, and cities, in instantaneous connection of concurring or conflicting thought. All are different forms, in size, color, and quality; but all exist thus, by means of the one material, your brain; just as nature exists, in successive lines, all infinite, of the Substance of Thinking Being. The utter difference, aside from such likeness, is this: God's attributes in nature are the unknown Substance itself, of which our ideas are only personal forms, made by combination and reflection through human attributes, to correspond with their ideates.

So we realize two kinds of like ideas in Substance — one being

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in material form, the other its extension in mental form — neither of which can be known except as it exists in the other, or in something else. Therefore, the way in which all life, and every variety of form, visible or invisible, material or immaterial, follow everywhere at the same time in Thinking Being, seems to be more nearly illustrated by a human mind than any other way. It indicates the fact that all the varieties of nature, while related through every change, as being of the same Substance, are different, without beginning or end of difference, as being the ideas of Substance, in Thinking Being or in God.

From a grain of sand all the way to man, throughout the vegetable, insect, or animal kingdom, everything in the world, or in the universe, directs itself by the intelligence of itself, in the power of something else, that also directs itself by its own nature, in something else, that is in something else, and so on to infinity. Each thing then, and therefore all things, exist in something else inclusive of them, without the existence of which they could never appear. And now we see a paradox, that becomes an utter absurdity, unless we admit the existence of Thinking Being. What is that without which a thing could never appear? It is itself, and nothing else; not in material form but in Substance. We have this fact then: each thing is in the same absolute existence that all things are in, or nothing can be without itself, carried from cause to effect, infinitely extended in the Substance of Thinking Being.

One form of life then, and all forms, must exist of Thinking Being; not only like your personal ideas of them, but further to illustrate, like every particle of your brain, all which is said to be one and the same of material, whether involved in a single thought, or in a multitude of different thoughts. Thus every creation is of the infinite concurrence in God's attributes.

And here we come to conceive of the Supreme Absolute, as involving each thing and all things, from the sparrow to the man, from the world to the universe. And thus we may begin to realize how it is that all things and all intelligence are of Intelligence in essence, or of God, in the immutable laws of Absolute Being.

When the atheistic bug stands in the door-yard of the Lord's creation, and from the summit of his presumption says, "no God!" why not say of himself, no bug, no man, because he tries in vain to understand the mystery of life?

When he cries out shame upon disease inherited by innocence, shame upon earthquakes and volcanoes that bury men alive, shame

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on yellow fever, small-pox, famine, pestilence, deformity and death, shame on life that feeds on life, "making every tooth a tombstone," why not learn that individual death is no misfortune to the universe, that all is life in God, that partial evil in a single world, as in the proper law of nations, must be universal good?

From one billion four hundred million people on earth, sixty-eight lives are lost each minute and seventy are born. With every pulse a life is lost, and another one appears. Nature's pulse is life and death alike. And on account of life's misfortunes, or because all life is not a steady joy secure from danger, would he arraign the universal laws, as though they were especially for man? If human life is good, as proved by every struggle for it first and last, can the law of death, essential to it, or in which it is, that makes life possible, be bad? If any miserable life does not justify the necessary constitution of the world, in relation to itself, death does it even in the individual case.

The whole difficulty is here: people think of God as a first great cause, instead of Absolute Existence, free from cause, eternal in all attributes. He is looked for as an outside individual of supreme influence, instead of that Being in whom, of whom, and by whom, all other being is, and is contained.

It is impossible to know what we do not possess in our own nature. We are only conscious of our own limited attributes by relation of what we have in ourselves, to that which is in something else. As a thing is red, we have color; as it is hard or soft, we have quality in feeling; as it is round, we have form; as it is sour, we have taste. A concord of sounds in harmony with what one has, is music. To another it may be discord, on account of his having more or less in relation to music. The rose is fragrant only as we have smell. The perfume that is pleasant to one is offensive to another. So we might go on in the relation of similar and different things, tracing them into endless combinations, to find nothing existing in each individual knowledge, except exactly as the individual exists, or nothing known of the absolute being of anything.

And so of mental operations or affections; we say we learn things from others, as that a square has four sides and four right angles; but when we learn this or anything else, we only find that we possessed the elements of a corresponding idea, unknown to ourselves. In other words, we develop to our own recognition what we already have in mind, brought out and combined in cor-

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respondence with the pattern presented or calculation made. And no matter how many the improved facilities for learning wonderful things, nor how feeble, clear, or dull the mind is, the material and powers possessed in thought, must be the same in the mind understanding anything as that which is expressed in the thing understood.

You may think this theory untenable, or find it hard to harmonize it with the fact of progressive accumulations of knowledge from infancy up. But we refer to power in act, simultaneous in time, with what calls it out in likeness. And till the mental power has grown by use of any faculty equal to the conception involved in what you strive to learn, you cannot learn it; or you can learn a thing only partially or perfectly, just as your power possessed is partial or perfect.

We might continue as to the relative effects of the sublime and beautiful; but this will suffice to illustrate the fact that no man can ever know any of God's attributes, except so far as he may have evidence of those that are in himself. He can neither know, nor adequately conceive of anything, except in the progress of his own natural powers by means of a few attributes, and hence can never comprehend nor form any adequate conception of absolute self-existence, with infinity of attributes without beginning, and without finite relations, or relation to finite forms. But for this reason to deny the necessity of such existence, as demonstrated by creation, is the very top of egotistic madness.

The best humanity can do is to have a consistent, honest theory, whereby the little that we do know may not be denied to pacify inherited superstition; whereby to silence the atheism of science as well as ignorance; a system by which our own existence asserts the existence of God, by which a small intelligence may not assume to be greater than the Intelligence in which it is, by which the impediments of religious fiction are removed, and by which our life may be a joy of better works, for the highest benefit of man.

Because they wish not to recognize by faith the Being they are in, or because others follow God in absurd ways, through a wilderness of errors, or because an atheist is unable to find Him in the works of nature, fools have said in practice or in heart, "there is no God." And a multitude of honest, thinking people, who are neither fools nor parrots of Paine or Ingersoll, are also in the darkness of doubt.

The churches dare not take grounds broad enough to answer the

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logic of an atheist like Ingersoll. Why don't the Beechers, the Talmages, the Lorimers, and every honest priest or preacher, meet the demand of reason, with a more consistent, better account of the God they worship? Is it because humanity has not outgrown the necessity of some artificial hell? because it has not outgrown the need of a personal devil and a personal God like man? because it is not yet wise enough, nor good enough, nor brave enough, to be taught the sacred truth of its own divinity as it is in Substance — of its own responsibility as it is in flesh? or is it because they fear to damage the platform from which they have done the preaching of a lifetime?

If reputation or the reward of fashion must be lost by the pursuit of truth, let them go. Cross the road. Walk the margin of a nobler way and broader view. Study by dogmatics less, by reason more, and preach this truth — God's grace is in you all alike whose lives are pure, who love all good, resist all evil, succor the needy, and defend the weak, whether professors of the Christian religion or professors of no religion at all.

By the light of reason and by the reason of faith, what do we conceive God to be? That partial, jealous, changeable, bloodthirsty god of Jewish history, has passed away. The better ideal of Christianity improves just as humanity improves. And by the widest reach of enlightened reason, we will come to conceive of God as Absolute Spirit, involving the essence of Substance without form, but without which no universe could be. What do we mean by absolute? We mean self-existent, unconditional being, without beginning or cause, free from effect, or affected by nothing in the relative universe; and hence unknowable by man, because of inability to know itself by any finite means.

Since human mind can only conceive of what is beyond its limit of cognizance by forms that are within it, let us try to approach a conception of mode by the form of a circle. As the circle infinite involves all circles and all other forms within it, while it has no conceivable limit or relation to any one involved, so of God, involving all things and all attributes. And if it be urged again, that finite things, or ideas, in infinite extension of mind, as God's atttributes, must extend in relations infinite or unknowable, we come no less, but more forcibly (as to the mode of space), to realize the necessity of a Unity Absolute in which they are.

Absolute Being then, depends not on anything nor any condition of things; nor can it be affected, responsibly or otherwise, by any

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of the relations in creation, that flow in endless variety of form from the concurrence of attributes in mind and matter.

Earth, and all the shining millions that revolve in space, are no more absolute and free than the drops of blood in a human body. Though all those orbs took fire and passed away in a universe of flame, Intelligence Absolute would still remain unchanged.

To reason otherwise were to reduce all to absurdity; for inseparable from absoluteness in power and perfection must also be unchangeableness; whereas all the forms of matter are forever changing. And moreover, the absolute power of Spirit, involving Substance in essence, cannot be conceived as making itself other than it is, unless we admit that the indestructible could destroy itself, or that God could limit and destroy His own absolute immutability, or His own nature, and become another being at pleasure. This proposition is too absurd and contradictory for a moment's notice. It assumes a will power that could destroy the laws of positive existence in which it is. There is, however, a class of reasoners who deny the absolute infinity of God, because there appears to be no omnipotent will able to defeat or destroy the universal laws of His own nature, to prevent evil. In other words, they claim He is not infinite or absolute, because He is not finite, or capable of arbitrary control like a man! This is simply preposterous. But to maintain their theory, they say that force and matter being co-existent, the fixed quantity or limit of force in matter proves the limitation of matter and motion, and hence the limitation of space, with which it is said matter must be co-extensive. Therefore, the universe is said to be finite, and hence there is no reason to suppose that God is necessarily infinite. As to this argument, we will only say that the fixed properties, modes, or parts in extension, have no more relation to extension itself, whether as to force, matter, motion, or space, than the colors we see on a piece of cloth have to the unknown extent of the piece. Material forms and those forces that are everywhere proportioned alike in matter, may enter into the measurement of our conceptions of infinitude; but, like those conceptions themselves, can bear no relation to immeasurable space, which we call infinite for many reasons, the sum total of which is, it is impossible to conceive of its limit.

And only look at what other difficulties are arrived at from any such misconception of God, as His being a relative creator, consciously responsible throughout for his creation, but unable of will, to direct the universal details of justice. Every misdirection of

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matter, every conflict of laws, every cry of anguish, every discord and pain of innocent life, every wrong upon his people, every victory of unholy might over right, must be allowed to affect Him. So, instead of being absolute and free, He would be made to seem an inexpressibly unfortunate originator of misfortunes as well as joys, changeably affected by what we call good and bad, order and discord, on account of our relative personal existence. A greater absurdity than this can hardly be arrived at.

To illustrate our meaning, let us speak further of that common error as to will which would reduce God to a relative being. The word will is used in reference to God, for want of some better word, to express the idea of an immutable moral force in absolute existence. By this the world has been greatly misled. So far as we can know of it, will is a product of mental powers, dependent upon organism for being known, though not so dependent — like the gods of Ingersoll — for actual lineal existence.

As humanly related, or known, will is a form of thought, thought a form of mind, mind a form of Thinking Being; and no such known form can possibly exist as a part of such Absolute Being, any more than the form of Earth, or the form of man.

Will, as decided by any relation of powers, to do, or forbear doing anything, has reference to the accomplishment of some object. But inasmuch as God is the infinite of accomplishments, to whom nothing is unknown, discoverable, or undone, there is no need nor possibility of thought or will, in any such form or direction, according to any human understanding of those words. Will, in act of thought, made or determined by preponderance of force, or choice, is the only way we are conscious of it as anything definable of reason. And yet, not because it is thus necessarily unknown to us as a power in itself absolute, or in every idea outside of organism, do we admit or declare its non-existence as such; but what we assert is this: all ideas, wills, and forms of thought, and all those minds that act by such forms, can no more involve Absolute Thinking Being than your image, reflected from a mirror into your eyes by sunlight, involves the essential essence of sunshine.

In the ignorant ages of man, he ascribes nearly every effect in nature to an act of divine will, such as he himself is conscious of, only on a more perfect universal plan, perhaps. But it is the glory, solace, and firm reliance of enlightened men, to feel that nothing depends upon any uncertain chance of divine favor; that God's universal laws must be followed in glad submission to enjoy their fruits in pleasure, their consolation in pain.

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Now it may be inquired how Absolute Being can properly be named Thinking, unless it thinks, and how it can think, unless by forms of thought. As before proved, how God understands Himself without relation, is unknowable. But to see the perfect fitness of the name Thinking, it is only necessary to reflect that nothing appears to you unless as a manifestation of thought from thinking; and that all the world, or humanity itself, with all its thoughts inclusive, is a like manifest form of thinking. In raising, milling, and baking wheat, it is changed into a hundred forms; but the wheaten being, of which they all are, remains the same. Completely burnt up, it seems to be extinct, but the elements and idea in which it first germinated still remain, of Thinking Being the same as in previous forms, when we said they were of wheaten being.

Or to make farther comparison of relative forms, to which we are limited, take light, electricity, and human thought, each one a relative attribute. Before the human attribute found and applied the other two to a thousand uses not seen in nature, the full capacity and power developed in those uses existed the same as now. And Thinking Being, as involving those forms or acts of thought, is still eternally the same perfect essence, that thinks not in form, or personality; but is the Being itself of infinite Thinking in Substance, free from cause or effect, and no more involved in any form of thought or matter than if such form had never existed.

If you sleep like a log, unconscious, dreamless, thoughtless, you are no less that form of Thinking Being than you were when awake and thinking. Regardless of change or condition, nothing can ever cease to be of Thinking Being. That which is of essence the attribute Thinking itself, involving all thought, in infinite infinities, can have no need nor possibility of thought in any sense that a human mind does, for it is itself all that it can be said to want or think. And so of all God's attributes; every will in act, every form of the universe in act of power can in no wise be conceived of rationally, as coming from or involving God, but only as being involved in God.

And this view only confirms the popular idea, no other way maintainable, of His unchangeable perfection. And so we come to say of all thoughts and wills; they must be relative, and cannot pertain to absolute Thinking Being in any manner as they do to man. In fact, the moment we give to thought and will the character of

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changeless perpetuity, they cease to be conceived of as thought and will, and we call them immutable laws of nature. The application and relative power of these we refer to as evidence of relative thinking, because in their perception and the production of effects by them, we say we think.

Would it sound absurd to say of gravitation, that it is one of God's thoughts? If Absolute Being can be said to think, verily, such must be its mode of thought, in those fixed laws by use of which we think and work.

If a man is killed by falling from a house-top, or dropping into the sea, instead of rising from it, we say, "It was the will of God; his time had come." And yet we do not assume any new volition in the spirit of things to cause it. The being of gravity force, regardless of all the relations within it, remains the same. So of light, heat, and all other powers in essence, of that omnific unity called God; we do not call them thoughts or wills, but by changing our relations, or the relation of other things in the power of their being, we can change relative effects, after the manner of changing our thoughts.

In this respect, it may indeed appear that such forces in action are related to each other throughout matter, as thoughts and wills are related in human mind, involving all things that are within their power. Extend the analogy by taking away personal limit from the attributes in man, and imagine some creature living in one of them, as we live in gravitation, or in all of them, as we do in the unity of God's unlimited attributes, and it will seem no wonder that man has declared himself made in the image of God, or in His idea.

If egotism or priestcraft has made gods to resemble men in form,—if ignorant men make gods in a thousand other forms, as children, struggling up degrees that bound their view, take dolls for babies,—if every formal archetype of God conceivable has been destroyed as false and visionary,—it only proves the littleness of man, and touches not the fact or question of a necessary God Existence.

Section VI.

Touching again the logic of materialism, it says that God and nature are the same, for the universe could not have been made of nothing, because there was no nothing to make it of; inasmuch as the Infinite God filled infinite space. It alleges, therefore, that the

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infinite universe must have been, or been made of, the Infinite God; and that more than one thing in the same place, or more than one infinite, being impossible, they are necessarily one and the same.

This statement, at first view, by sense of material measurement alone, so far as relates to extension, without reference to concurrent attributes in the same space, would seem to be true; nor will it avail, in proof of difference, only to say that spirit infinitude is eternal, and has no form, while the material universe has form and divisibility; for infinite matter, *in esse*, is also eternal, informal, and indivisible. To stop here, then, were apparently to concede the materialistic God, with the effect of blinding people as to the fact that extended matter alone, so far as we can know, or conceive of it, is only a single manner, means, or property of God's infinitude; of which it is agreed on all sides that two atoms cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

Even within the limit of our senses, we find in one thing, in one place, in the same space, many attributes; such as color, odor, heat, light, and electricity, added, in unity, to material texture. This fact ought to satisfy every one that there are other distinct properties, or attributes, co-extensive with matter; and that any one of them might just as reasonably be called God, on account of extension, as matter is. But the sophistry of atheism appeals to ignorance, by means of what is tangible; and either assumes, or leaves it to be inferred, that all powers, and all phenomena, are inherently of materiality, and that, besides this, there are no co-equal infinities.

If we were another order of beings, so constituted that forms of matter were unseen or unknown; or, to put it otherwise, if forms were invisible, and only ideas known, it would come to be said, in the same manner, — Since there is an infinity of ideas, and there can be only one infinite, therefore what we call infinite mind is the same as God.

Or, to assume no change of being like that, so far as relates to extension, or on account of omnipresent infinity, the same as claimed for matter, we might follow Herbert Spencer and declare that force is God.

And thus we might go on, asserting the same of any infinite attribute, like gravitation, or electricity, or any adequate idea of which we may conceive; calling it God, on account of infinite extension, with the same propriety that the universe can be called God.

And so, indeed, possibly on this very theory, we find Mr. Ingersoll calling himself God, or "part of God." Balaam's ass might

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just as properly have made the same claim for himself and fellows, if his speech had lasted; otherwise we have that gentleman (Mr. Ingersoll) with a god made exclusively of men, or a man-form god. In this case, what will he do with every other genus of nature? In any event, the skunk, rattlesnake, shark, baboon, and whale, can certainly be no formal partners of his in such a god? The only escape is to have more gods from his factory, in place of those destroyed. Each different form and nature must have a god to suit it. In fact, the only reasonable outcome of his theory, on any basis of organism, is to have everything its own god, instead of making everything "a part of one god." And how Mr. Ingersoll can be "a part of god," or part of "an eating, thinking organism" that does not exist, is verily the greatest puzzle of the age!

It would be just as reasonable, however, for him to assume being the whole God, because of his being, as an idea, an infinite attribute of God, as it would be to assume that the universe is God, on account of infinity.

To be absolute, neither demands nor admits organism. And as to light, heat, electricity, gravitation, or like forces, we know not their substance, but only their effects, made manifest by material relations, the same as we know everything else. And so of these, the same as of Mr. Ingersoll, we cannot say to what we know, behold God, or "part of God!" for this were to limit Him as a dependent being, without substance, subject to an endless variety of changes, uses, and abuses.

Until we can begin to conceive of numberless degrees and varieties of being unknowable, — of the eternality or infinity of co-existent infinities, neither of which is the cause of the other, but all involved in Supreme Being, — we can no more approximate a true conception of an Absolute God, than those microscopic bioplasts who are busy at work building up every part in our bodies can conceive the being of man. But, nevertheless, we know enough to realize that such Being must necessarily exist, to account for what appears.

Oh, what a little fool is man! the infinitesimal bioplast of God! to presume, like Robert Ingersoll, that there is nothing different from what his vision reveals by introspection of nature, by reason, science, microscope and telescope! When that man declares "there is nothing superior to nature," that "nature embraces all there is of God,"— swelling like the fabled frog who tried to be as big as an ox, — why does he not add, Since there is nothing superior to me,

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I embrace all there is of nature, and therefore I am all there is of God? If the falsities and horrors of religious fanaticism make us ashamed of our savage race, such mad assumption, such loss of reason, such supreme conceit upon the other side, has only added shame to shame.

Tell us how and what you know of nature. How much more do you know nature on the material side of being, than others know God on the spiritual side? Is there nothing where you think nothing is, because you know nothing there? Make and think of a perfect vacuum, so far as you can know of it. Is not your idea in the vacuum, the same as in yourself when your thought involves it? And do not ideas, like the atoms of a magnet, who hitch their little chains upon a piece of iron, right through a vacuum, or within it, require a coarser medium than nothing to enable their extension, the same as odor requires air? Is the opposite of what you know as something, or the idea of its absence, nothing? Is God to you another word for nothing? What is this but another word for something beyond what you know, *ad infinitum*, absolute?

In its common sense this word *nothing* has long enough misled the world. It signifies an absence impossible, except as to what you know; and even of this, the idea remains in the scope of your mental power, or you could not think of its absence. If you could see by means of magnetic power, that passes, unimpeded, in the dark, through metals, rocks, and timbers, looking through the earth as through the air, it were not impossible that you might have come to preach,— There's no such world as this, because I fail to see it.

Trying to exclude the Substance of God from nature, let Science begin to experiment, and make the most perfect vacuum possible. Electricity refuses to appear in it, or to pass through it. You say there is nothing there to conduct it. Now, placing a thermometer inside the glass receiver, you exhaust the air, move it into the sunshine, or a place of greater heat, and you learn that there was something there, more subtile than electricity could use, for light and heat produce the same effect they do outside of it. Or do you wish to find within it a means of power as certain as the ropes and cables of a ship? let loose a weight from the top of it, and see how fast the unknown chain of gravitation pulls it down.

Here *in vacuo* is nothing, that proves to be something unknown. Do you believe in its existence? Is a man worse evidence to himself than a vacuum affords to you? Because you cannot see the spiritual magnet, thermometer, and light inside of him, that speak

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of God, or because the power he feels is not subject to chemical analysis, or scientific explanation, would anything but presumptive impudence assert that no such power exists? Now what enables or involves that power *in vacuo*, which enables the effect of other powers? Do you still say nothing beyond that first nothing, of which you are forced to admit the enabling power, by proof of gravity, light, heat, and magnetism? Not demanding, as atheism does, an impossible proof, we concede you another degree of emptiness (hardly necessary), or a vacuum inside the first vacuum, that shall exclude the means of those visible effects referred to. Light, heat, chemical effect, magnetism, must cease to appear. Even gravitation, which La Place says is fifty million times faster than light, and which you shall be supposed to know as readily as you would a race-horse, is no longer manifest. Now conceive an utter absence of the unknown means, which you had perfect faith was there before. By successive relations in mind, to such a something unknown, the very idea of this nothing, in itself, or in you, proves it to be something of exhaustless mind, the same as everything else, descending from infinite refinements, in the unknown Substance of Thinking Being.

All that you know, comes of this spirit substance which you call nothing, till you get a hint of its essence by some relative form. This spirit of life, whereby you think, whereof you are, is the antecedent maker of everything, from the calf skin on your feet to the clothes upon your back, from animalcule to whale, from coral reef to the great globe itself. By what is sunshine, water, grass, and air made into calf-skin, wool, or any of a thousand patterns, full of beauty, woven in the living loom of nature? By what is the invisible freightage of the air made into metals, minerals, and earth, or earth into lovely vegetation, crowned with fruitful trees? By what do gases become liquids and solids, through the life of nature, when they refuse to liquefy by artificial process, under tons of pressure and two hundred and twenty degrees of cold, as in the case of oxygen, hydrogen, or nitrogen? By what do two such gases furnish all the living, sparkling water of the world?

Atheism tells us not by any intelligence in nature superior to the intelligence of man, or even superior to the nature that is beneath man! In fact, it goes another step, and says that such intelligence is not intelligence, because it is perfectly natural, and could not be otherwise. In other words, such natural intelligence, with all its vastness of vivific power, outside the finite forms of beauty that it

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makes, is only blind, hap-hazard ignorance! And therefore there is no God! Was ever reason so disgraced in any other cause? Is that the sort of logic used by our Jupiter of the rostrum, Mr. Ingersoll, to enlighten courts and juries, where he practices the law? Is that the way he proves no cause of action, no main intention above concurrent benefits or injuries? Is that the way intelligence, too natural, argues the disproof of wills unwritten, attested by many witnesses "who still have the cheerful habit of living?" Would he fight a patent claim, involving only the use of a copy from eternal nature, on the ground of no intelligence on that account? If not, must he presume that such intelligence of use begins with the discoverer, who is said to be only another piece of the same natural intelligence, called ignorance?

To conclude the farcical absurdity of such evolution from nature, it says this: non-intelligence in general becomes intelligence in particular by the creature whom non-intelligence made; and so, from darkness we get light! from blindness we get sight!

It is allowed to be the most wonderful of miracles, how anything does itself, or brings itself into existence from non-existence! but then, the gullet-ability of any scientific atheist is enough greater than that required of Jonah's whale in swallowing Jonah, to swallow the whale himself, and every other miraculous work, if it is only called the work of nature, and not the work of God.

Beyond the short range philosophy of such science, by every change of form, by every increasing circle of existence, all nature declares itself to be an involution of Thinking Being. All forms of nature are in the formative ideas of spirit, but nature cannot be known as such till spirit has made it knowable.

With proof complete in other parts of this argument of such a necessity, we say then, that spirit existence, involving nature as the effect of its ideas, is involved in God. On the contrary, reasoning from nature as the cause of all phenomena, atheism says that nature, involving the spirit of life, must involve God, if any God were possible; chiefly because, so far as we know, everything is found to be natural. This reason is born of shallow sounding, between the points of appearance and disappearance, in the boundless sea of force. In the control of unknown laws, new phenomena appear, opposed to anything we knew before as natural, — nature itself comes out from the invisible, — a world is made, an asteroid is added to the universe, a comet shoots the passage of the Milky

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Way, on circuit of a thousand years through space (the pleasure train, for aught we know, of lives intangible), and still the cry comes up from that asylum of scientific ignorance, "behold the unknown potentialities of nature!"

A mind that so conceives these wonders of the universe, as not included in the intelligence of Supreme Power, cherishes a plan far more absurd, a faith more blind, than Buddhist, Jew or Christian.

Mr. Ingersoll inquires, "if God wants to be known, why does he not advertise?" This is a modest query for a disciple of Darwin's monkey theory! Why did not the Creator, who Darwin assumes breathed life into the first few forms, advertise Himself to the tadpole, the porpoise, and the bat? Why does not a father advertise himself to his baby before its eyes are open to the light? Why not demand that man be made equal to God, if there is one, so as to be able to comprehend Him?

If one small life, or living forest leaf, or page of rock upon the mountain shelves, or Earth itself, reveals to Mr. Ingersoll the need of no intelligence beyond his own, it is because he reads what is contained in the dot of one I, or the word of one world, for all there is. God's grand perpetual-motion press is nature. Its million kinds of type are infusoria, of which millions in one heap do not equal a grain of mustard seed. Berlin slate is approximately proven to be made of forty-one thousand million of those animalcular types to the cubic inch. The mineral atoms in a corpuscle of blood, like the atoms of a magnetic ray, are not made visible by aid of any microscope. Is it strange, then, that he fails to read with natural eyes, all that is advertised of God's omnific Substance to the eye of faith?

Because each part of nature has its own inherent law, involved in other laws; because a self-contradiction in nature is impossible, and no form can be the self-same and different both at once; because black is never possibly white, nor a square five-sided, nor a circle with unequal diameters, nor a string with only one end, nor truth false; because no power can make a two-year old steer in a minute, nor enable Mr. Ingersoll to fathom space with a ten-foot pole, — he infers no need, nor evidence of God! This were the same as denying the intelligence of geometric demonstration by forms, because the self-evident axioms involved are unalterably true. It is worse than confounding the intelligence of law with the letters of which it is composed. He confounds form with Sub-

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stance — the nature of a circle with the power that enables his idea of it — the form of stick or string with the power of life that produced it.

When he argues the absence of self-contradictory powers in nature as the absence of God, he only proclaims this woful fact: that nothing but the demonstration of a God that is utterly impossible, will ever convince him of a possible God! In this respect he is not altogether unlike a large class of his opponents who are waiting in doubt for the same kind of a demonstration.

He says "no one infers a God from the simple, from the known, but from the complex, from the unknown." We have already shown that the simple elements, as well as their combinations, prove the necessity of Thinking Being; and would refer the reader to the latter part of division II.

That common things come to be esteemed of no account, as evidence of God, is too true. The rationale of the universe in Thinking Being is declared, in degree, by a grain of sand, a blade of grass, a rain-drop, no less than by the great globe itself. We live, and breathe, and have our being by God, has come to mean no more than simply this: we live by air, water, and food; when, in fact, every atom, and invisible interstice between atoms, in the process of transmutation into flesh, bone, nerve, and tissue, is necessarily possessed and filled by the inexplicable spirit of life.

Everything produced by visible cause, or means, is called simple; when, in fact, not a single thing in all nature is produced without other means besides those we see and know.

The expressions of power by the sympathetic affection of plants, animals, human minds, worlds, — the simple actions of feeling, hearing, tasting, and seeing, are accounted as understood. Reflect and see. In its utmost simplicity, not a single one can be explained by what is visibly known. A dozen sounds of music strike your ear with a single blow: tone, key, force, discord, each instrument is heard in union, and in severalty, at once! Many effects are in the same place at the same time. Is here no miracle? Does this not shame those little temporary miracles, whereby a law is said to be made self-contradictory? You see things reflected through air and water. Do you say that's nothing? If the clairvoyant sees, without eyes, through the skull, or if one could see through a rock by magnetic rays, the same as through the air by rays of light, you would say these things are wonderful. And yet

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the ordinary seeing is capable of no better explanation than these would be.

I will never forget the disbelief and wonder that took me to western Pennsylvania to see the first appearance of petroleum. And, even now, I find it hard to realize the fact that simple water, or the air we breathe, is no less miraculous than floods of oil.

When Science does things seemingly impossible; as, for example, when it enables music to be heard a hundred miles away, or converts pure linseed oil into the best of rubber, the human mind is full of wonder and praise for its genius. But only refer, with praise, to any greater mystery, like simple sugar, turpentine, or rubber, in the sap of tree and cane, by the power of God, and some one says: "O, bah! the work of nature; I understood that when I was a child; give us a new miracle." Why, in the name of common sense, is human genius thus gratefully applauded, while Supreme Genius is derided or denied? If Science were to make a diamond, or force accretions of gold from invisible refinements in the dust, or in a sunset cloud, where it did not appear, as Edison was once said to do by electricity from mine tailings where the microscope failed to discover it; if a mineral insect could be produced from electrified stone, in a chemical saturation, made of powdered flint and carbonate of potassa, fused by intense heat, with additions of water and hydrochloric acid, as the chemist Andrew Crosse once said he had done; if all these, and yet a thousand things more wonderful could be done by science, they would but augment the evidence already found in the most simple elements, by more extended proof, of the omnific power involving and enabling such effects.

Because something is not done, or known to be, without material means, it is thought a simple thing; and the conceit of atheistic Science is so immense that when it traces a few steps the visible means connecting cause and effect, it vainly fancies the explanation complete, and says, No thanks to this, or this, or this, for it could not be otherwise than it is, simply because it is not. But straightway this Science sets about changing one thing into another, and converting one force into another, blindly forgetful of the fact that no such change or interchange of properties, no union, nor control of diverse kinships, and no universal union of all nature, could possibly be, without an essential Substance, common to all, in which, and of which, all exist.

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Conclusion.

We claim to have demonstrated, in the course of this argument, the all-pervading, all-encompassing Mind of Deity, dependent upon no "organism" for existence.

Instead of nature being the creative possessor of all power, embracing all matter, all force, all attributes, as claimed by Mr. Ingersoll, we have proved directly the reverse, by showing that all nature, so far as it is possible to pursue its evolution and involution in the power of ideas and laws, is involved in the possessive, enabling power of Thinking Being.

To maintain our position, we have not found it necessary to deny those assumptions of science, that have any color of truth, upon which atheism is based. The usual view of miracles, as violating the supreme reign of law, furnishes the most conspicuous target for atheism, — a worse than useless argument in proof of God, a boomerang of logic that destroys the whole plan of its projector. After wasting floods of eloquence in denial of such unessential miracles, Mr. Ingersoll says: "Until one is performed, there can be no evidence of the existence of any power superior to nature." This assertion, which has been proven to be utterly false, would seem to be more befitting his "rude savage, who always demands the evidence of miracles." It were infinitely less absurd to say that unless a man can change his big toe into a bird, by the wink of his eye, there is no evidence of any power in the man superior to the nature of the said toe.

Mr. Ingersoll declares: "There is a war between science and faith — an irrepressible conflict between religion and science, and they cannot peaceably occupy the same brain, nor the same world." Such a conclusion I deny. Far deeper than its creed formalities, systems, or foibles of belief, the essence of the Christian religion is the joyful practice of godliness, a desire for the highest truth. So if truth be the aim of science, what seems a conflict is only the repressible counterfeit of war.

Theories may change every day; but, whether religious or scientific, if their only object is truth, war is unnecessary. Full of anathemas, bigotry and fear, against the forward movement of the world, if men have won the world's contempt by abusing the Galileos of science, it only proves a succession of errors along the field of religion, not unlike the many errors of trial

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through which scientific faith has come to the grandest achievements of its genius.

Suppose science to have had and used the same power of persecuting intolerance, to enforce an error against religious theories, that religion once used against the march of science: ought that, in reason, to discredit all the aims, and works, — the joys, the comforts, and the benefits of science, forever after?

The priest of science and the priest of God may be one man in perfect harmony; and such must be the coming teacher of the world, whose prayer is truth, whose motto is advance.

When bigotry no more decries the pursuit of science, and the fool of science mocks the pursuit of God no more; when godliness shall find delight in the utmost reach of science; when the reverent wonder of the people is sustained by appeals to faith through reason, — by display of miracles in every element, in pebble, plant, or fish, in dew-drop, bird, or beast; when the deep stupendous miracle of Power that swings the universe, and blossoms in the rose, shall thus be made to blossom in the human heart, — then, and not till then, will the churches fill with students, and the increase of atheism stop.

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Address orders for this book to the author, P. O. Box No. 3469, Boston, Mass.

In preparation, a Supplementary Monograph — *The Chemistry of Ideas;* and also a Lecture, entitled *The Philippic of Science, Against the Ministry of Ingersoll.*

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